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ONE PENNY No. 112 Vol. III.

CITY

ONE PENNY Jan. 4, 1878.

JACKDAW



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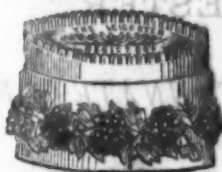
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THE CITY JACKDAW.

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THE CITY JACKDAW.

JANUARY 4, 1878.

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THE CITY JACKDAW:

A Humorous and Satirical Journal.

VOL. III.—No. 112.

MANCHESTER: FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 1878.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

STAGGERING HOME.

[BY LEONARD BRIGHT.]

DON'T be alarmed, gentle reader. David Jones, of Ancoats, is one of the finest fellows in Manchester. Everybody likes him because he likes everybody. A better friend, a more lively companion, one could not have. Sometimes he gets into little scrapes by reason of his fondness for frolic and fun, women and wine. Jones is a great lady's man, a convivial chap. At a party on New Year's Day, he treated the ladies and gentlemen present to a chapter from his experience while the snow was lying on the ground last week. What he said was something like this:—

Why should I conceal anything? I must tell you all about it.

I had been at a merry gathering which was attended by a few old ladies, a good many young ones, and about a dozen gentlemen, old and young.

There were lots of mistletoe and lots of whiskey. Either of these articles is innocent enough by itself when taken in moderation—but mistletoe and whiskey mixed have played the deuce with many a decent man ere now.

Being a bachelor—a bachelor, to boot, who is nearly as fond of the ladies as the ladies are fond of him—I had a good deal of mistletoe.

Being a convivial sort of customer, I likewise did my duty by the whiskey.

But I was intoxicated neither by the one nor the other. Not a bit of it. No doubt the mistletoe excited me somewhat. No doubt the whiskey did ditto. What of that? My head was still clear; my legs still steady.

Two o'clock in the morning came at last. I had a little more mistletoe, as well as a little more whiskey, and then I departed.

Cabs weren't to be had for love or money; so I had to trudge it—I was going to say to my home, but I mean to my lodgings.

Not much put about, I faced the task as heroically as Osman Pasha faced that terrible circle of Russian soldiers round Plevna.

Without wishing to praise myself, I cannot help here expressing it as my solemn conviction that a man who can enter with a brave heart on a two miles' walk at two in the morning, after a night spent in the sweet company of mistletoe and whiskey, and with, as I said, a deep layer of snow on the ground—such a man, I think, would be a hero under any circumstances.

Be that as it may, I went boldly forward. I mean that I did my best to go forward. But with the mistletoe and the whiskey behind me, and the long stretches of snow before me, my advance, if steady, was slow.

So slippery did my boots become, after I had travelled what seemed to be half a mile, that I began to fancy I was really making progress backwards instead of forwards.

This was a critical state of things. Stopping, and leaning against a house, I thought it best to solve the knotty point, there and then, before going farther.

I was satisfied that even in such a storm as that my stride was good enough for two feet and a half. But now that the suspicion had struck me I began seriously to fear that for every two feet and a half I strode forward I slipped three feet backward.

"Could it be," I asked myself, "that all the while I had been going from, instead of going to, my lodgings?"

I looked round me; but I could not make out particularly where I was. I did not know that part of the city very well, and the snow made any one house just like any other house.

If a cab or even a donkey's cart had providentially turned up just then, I would have given all the contents of my purse in return for a ride to my destination.

Neither Providence nor luck was on my side.

My limbs had been so knocked about since I left my friend's house that I could have done with a night's lodgings anywhere.

But, I feared, even these were not to be had conveniently.

"Come, come,—hic—none of your little larks—hic—you must move—hic—on," said a Peeler, falling upon me all of a sudden, and turning his bull's eye upon me as well at his condition would allow him to do so.

"That's what I want to do," I replied, laughing; "but I can't—who can such a night as this?"

"I can—hic—I has to do, you—hic—see; and you must—hic—do so too."

"My good fellow, where am I?"

"You're near—hic—Oxford Road; what's your—hic—name?"

"My name is Jones," I answered.

"I's heerd that—hic—name before; where are you a-makin' for—hic?"

"I live in Ancoats."

"Well—hic—what does you—hic—want here?"

"I want to get away; but, man, look at the snow; and there isn't a cab to be got."

"If you interferences—hic—with me and my—hic—duties much longer, I's be after a-findin' a—hic—stretcher fer yez."

"No you wont," getting annoyed; "do you know who you're talking to?"

"Yes—hic—very well; Jones of—hic—Ancoats; I knows my—hic—duties, which is more than all the Force can—hic—say. Come now, move on—hic—if you can; and if you can't—hic—say so."

"You're impertinent, sir; what's your number?"

"There it is, on my—hic—collar."

"Very good," I continued, jotting down the fellow's number on an old envelope; "I shall duly report both your conduct and your condition."

"And I shall take you up if you—hic—stand here a-hinterferin' with a hoffer in the execution of his duty—hic."

"Take me up, sir; take me up; I shall be glad to be taken care of by anybody and anywhere to-night."

"Now, old boy, why don't you—hic—and save all bother? It's the Christmas an' New Year time, an' the Force don't want to—hic—be too hard on the likes o' you—hic. We is only men ourselves, God knows—hic."

"Well, let's try it together," I said, laughing in my sleeve; "we're both going the same road, and we may help to cheer each other on the way and keep one another from stumbling."

"All right; you're a—hic—brick; I seed from the first that you—hic—was a gen'lleman; but we o' the Force needs to—hic—put it on an' look as savage as we can—hic."

Before we had journeyed many yards I made a stumble which all but brought me down.

"You's got too much, you know," said the policeman, splitting with laughter; "but never mind—hic—I's—hic—help you on and let you hoff. We o' the Force has to—hic—do these things hoften—hic."

"I haven't got too much," I replied, with some little indignation; "I haven't had enough. Neither have you."

Then my protector stopped and laughed and hiccupped as though he would have burst on the spot.

"I's had almost none all the blessed night—hic. Have been on duty since ten. Have to be on duty till six—hic—yet have hardly had a—hic—single drop."

"Can't we get a glass anywhere?" I asked, feeling almost pumped out.

"No; impossible; can't—hic—be done. The Force has to—hic—huphold the law—hic."

"Surely our civilisation hasn't reached such a pitch of progress, that a

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perishing man, like myself, cannot anywhere obtain a drop of anything to revive him."

"Let me—hic—see; I think I may—hic—have the smallest dreg in a bottle here—hic; I wouldn't do it, but I see you's a gan'leman."

Saying this, my generous companion kept fumbling first at the one tail, and then at the other tail, of his great coat, but without success.

"Allow me," I said; "perhaps I may be able to help you."

Feeling both pockets, and satisfying myself that each contained a bottle, I was content to pull out only one.

"Got it from a friend—hic—a good sort o' fellow. Take a—hic—drain."

"After you," I said.

"It's all right. It's the real thing—hic. The best Irish whiskey. Got it from a friend in the—hic—line."

I drank after my benefactor; and then, feeling refreshed, we resumed our arduous journey.

But we hadn't proceeded far when the guardian of the peace came to the ground all of a heap, partly on account of the snow, chiefly on account of the drink.

Fearing that he might get himself into trouble, to some extent on my account, I resolved to save him as far as I could.

Raising him up, I induced him to sit down on a retiring doorstep, and I placed myself by his side.

In less than a minute he was fast asleep.

We had remained there some thirty minutes. I dare not let him sleep any longer. The inspector or the sergeant would be round soon. I also hoped that half-an-hour's snooze would answer the purpose. Strong young fellows, such as the most of our policemen are, can soon sleep off a little too much drink. Before arousing him, I had made a point of emptying his bottles—not drinking their contents myself: I wanted no more that night—but pouring them out on the snow.

When I awakened him he was wonderfully sobered. I told him what I had done with the whiskey, and I also informed him that my object in denying him the drink and giving him the short sleep was to keep him from losing his place.

"Many thanks, Mr. Jones," he said, leaving me; "I wish you A HAPPY NEW YEAR, an' many o' 'em."

"The same to you, and may no one get on worse than I have done in STAGGERING HOME through the snow."

SONGS OF THE DAY.—No. IV.

[BY FIGARO JUNIOR.]

I'VE lately been alarmed—I may confess it—
About the state of my immortal soul;
I have a doubt, although I would repress it,
About my chance of getting to the goal,
Where everyone, according to tradition,
Will get a prize proportioned to his meed—
An object of most laudable ambition,
And one that every sinner ought to heed.

I have a doubt of winning; but the reason
Is not because of virtue I've a dearth—
Indeed, I could, were this the place or season,
Demonstrate my surpassing moral worth.
Oh no! it's not from any lack of virtue,
As I with all due modesty can say,
It is—I say it not my guides to hurt you—
Because I've altogether lost the way.

You see the road is rough and badly lighted,
And full of awkward pitfalls and of holes;
And when the weary traveller, benighted,
Suspects them least, then headlong in he rolls.
'Tis true each clerical signpost points its finger,
To guide us in the way we ought to go,
But as each shows a different way, we linger,
Which makes our progress marvellously slow.

Of course each post is bound to be believing,
The road whereon he stands the only one,
And to maintain the others are deceiving,
So that whoever trusts them will be done.
But this don't help me much when I am wondering,
And thinking how the dence to get along;
For, though I'm sure that some of them are blundering,
I can't tell which is right, or which is wrong.

I know there's lately set on foot a movement
For pulling down a few offending posts;
But this, though, perhaps, a step towards improvement,
Will not do much amongst such numerous hosts.
And while they judge what laws should be rescinded,
And which of all the posts they will uproot,
I've got myself entirely broken-winded,
And can't go on because I'm sore of foot.

Now this, of course, is terribly alarming,
And very hard on mortals, who, like me,
Would each submit, with confidence most charming,
To all these doctors could they but agree.
But almost every one has got his nostrum
For curing all imaginable ills,
And every quack can freely mount a rostrum
To offer us his Government-stamped pills.

On every hand we hear a horrid clatter
And rubbing up of weapons of offence,
Each host of black militia full of chatter
About the best provision for defence;
For every one insists that his proposal
Is much more efficacious than the rest,
The others all decree its swift disposal
Or treat it as a harmless little jest.

And thus they never get to common action,
Excepting like the old Kilkenny cats,
For, to keep up its fighting power, each faction
Hunts all the others like a set of rats;
The way they curse each other is most awful,
It almost makes a fellow's blood run cold
To hear of shepherds doing things unlawful,
And letting all the wolves into the fold.

There is one thing on which they have decided,
And which with touching concord they agree—
On this the clerics never were divided—
That is their right to plunder you and me.
The only point they seem to hold in common
Is that we unoffending laymen live
In order that, whenever they choose to summon,
We may most humbly come to them and give.

It's clear I have much cause to be in trouble
About the chance of my immortal spark;
I don't know where it's going to walk or wobble,
Because the road it is so precious dark.
I sometimes think I must be going to Heaven—
Since fellow-passengers are very rare—
And as you know, to understand we're given,
The other road is crowded like a fair.

In fact, I feel considerably grateful—
So far from having any trace of spleen—
To Tyndall who relieves my troubles hateful,
By making me a vivified machine.
It's really an encouraging sensation,
Although one's pride may have a little fall,
When, after so much terror and vexation,
You find you have not got a soul at all.

STRAIT-JACKETS will be in great demand in London before long. Both the Press and the Public are getting excited about the crisis in the East. Russia very rightly refused to treat with Turkey through England as mediator. What ground had she for interfering at all? If Turkey has got enough of it let her say so and go to Russia herself begging for peace. Yet the *Daily Telegraph* sees in Russia's reply to Lord Derby's note a decided insult to England—almost, indeed, a *casus belli*. "The Russian Government," it shrieks, "have taken a great and unprecedented step, which cannot fail to cause a profound sensation throughout the country. Prince Gortschakoff has not only in effect put aside the offices of the British Cabinet, but has indicated a different procedure unparalleled in any such circumstances, and involving an absolute affront to this nation. He has cavalierly transferred from the council chamber to the camp and bivouac matters which touch the future of Europe and the welfare and dignity of England. He has inflicted on England an amazing insult. Burning indignation must inspire every English breast, when the treatment of the English Government is understood; and the vast majority of the nation will await, with the temper of a race unaccustomed to be cajoled or disregarded, the necessary measures which the Queen's Ministers must take to meet this insufferable treatment of their overtures." The *Pall Mall Gazette*, while calling all this "poor, exaggerated stuff," raves quite as much as the *Telegraph* on the subject, calling on the Government to do something, and declaring that "honour" has now departed from England. Not to be beat, the *Standard* asserted on Wednesday that any person who can write as the *Telegraph* is writing must be insane. The Tory press is as much at loggerheads as the Tory party as to what should be done in the present crisis.

THE GHOST OF THE GROVE.

GHOSTS and ghost stories are now much more rare than they used to be—modern civilisation, spiritualism, and the rest of it having, it is to be feared, utterly disgusted and driven away the old-fashioned ghosts which used to be the terror of small children, and of their elders, too, oftentimes. Quiet, antiquated, out-of-the-world towns and villages, however, have more bits of ghost lore attaching to them than many might think was the case, and if you can manage to light upon the "oldest inhabitant" of such places, and are skilled in the art of pumping, you may, even in these degenerate days, have the pleasure of hearing related tales the most gruesome and, sometimes, the most comical.

Waterton-on-Avon, in the county of Shropshire, is just such an ancient and highly respectable city as I have mentioned, and there are in connection with it several very hair-raising and wonderful stories of ghosts and strange sights. As a child—for my childhood was passed in Waterton—I almost trembled in every limb if by misfortune I had to pass certain spots late at night. I used to creep along with my heart in my mouth, as the saying goes, and any unusual noise was quite enough to send me flying towards home at a tremendous pace. The restrictions under which I am placed in regard to space forbid of my enlarging upon the curious beliefs which existed in the neighbourhood of my birthplace, and I immediately proceed to speak of the one laughable ghost incident to which I must confine myself.

Just outside the town of Waterton, and between that place and the village of Bourneford, was a very much admired grove of trees. It was not a very lengthy grove, but the trees were fine old fellows, stout and sturdy with the growth of many years, and with boughs so intertwined that when they were in full leaf but little sunshine could penetrate into what was very appropriately called "Shady Bower." In summer this cool retreat was the much-favoured resort of nursemaids and children by day and lovers by night, but on dark winter nights the grove presented a by no means inviting appearance, especially in the case of persons of weak nerves. I may mention, as an additional and important fact in connection with the appearance of Shady Bower, that there were really three rows of trees, so that in point of fact the grove was a double one.

Now anyone who has anything like a sharp eye for ghost lore will immediately see the propriety of such a place having its apparition, and I may at once say that a ghost it had. What was its precise form and appearance I never could quite gather. That it was a most terrible sight everyone agreed, but those to whom it appeared were so thoroughly terrified that nothing trustworthy could be got out of them. Some sceptics of course there were who, whenever they heard that some bumpkin or other had seen the ghost, hinted darkly at overdeep potations, and it was somewhat strange, truly, that this unquiet spirit was the most unquiet on market nights when the famous ale of Waterton was quaffed the most largely. Be that as it may, and be the spirit who he may—the ghost of old Jones who died from a surfeit of pork, the ghost of poor Thompson whose wife conceived that he was too good for this world and killed him by o'er much kindness, or the ghost of Sam Brown whose villainous liquors proved too much for himself—Shady Bower had a ghost.

The catastrophe came one cold, miserable night in autumn, the ghost having enjoyed a capital reputation for a considerable time. Mrs. Bright, the wife of an honest labouring man, found to her dismay on this particular autumn night that she was running short of bread. There was nothing for it but a tramp into Waterton, but, the prospect being a cheerless one, she hardly relished the idea of going herself, and eventually she prevailed upon one Tom English, an idle but, as was supposed, honest fellow, to do her errand for her. With a half-crown in his fist Tom accordingly started for town, which was just then in the annual state of excitement caused by the advent of Waterton fair. Half-an-hour ought to have seen Tom's return, but as an hour and more passed without any sight of him good Mrs. Bright became somewhat alarmed for the safety of her money. Of course she told her trouble to the few neighbours who lived near, and as these worthies were discussing with her the probability of her half-crown being "liquidated" by Tom, they were suddenly startled by frightful cries of "Help! Murder!" proceeding from the direction of Shady Bower.

A moment's thought caused their cheeks to blanch and their hearts to beat more quickly, and presently with bated breath the hardiest of them managed to articulate that which was uppermost in all their minds—"The Ghost!" Hardly were the words spoken before hurried, flying footsteps were heard, and presently from the direction of the Bower

appeared Tom English, running at the top of his speed, with uncertain tread, casting anxious looks behind him, and now and again yelling out "Help! Murder!" at the top of his voice.

The women, dreading that there might be something behind the man, rushed into the nearest house, and thither Tom followed them. For a brief space everybody was silent, Tom panting and blowing and the women eyeing him apprehensively.

At last, in a scarcely audible voice, Mrs. Bright put the very pertinent question, "Tom, what's the matter?"

"Matter enough," replied he, thickly and gutturally. "I've seen the ghost in the Bower."

Terrified glances were cast towards the door, but nothing was to be seen of an unearthly character, and feminine curiosity overmastering every other feeling, Mrs. Smith said, "And what is it like?"

"Like," answered Tom, "it's awful. I seed it as plain 's I see you. It were sitting on the rails at the top of the Bower, wi' a table in front of it covered wi' bones un' skulls. D'rectly it seed me it said, in a kind o' awful voice, 'Another meal fur me.' I tried to go on, but it took up a big knife un' said, 'Drop that loaf.' I'd got your loaf under my arm, Mrs. Bright, and when the ghost said that my arm got quite numb-like, and the loaf dropped. Un' then the ghost made me give un the money I'd got left out o' the half-a-crown, un' then it made a grab at me un' I run un' hollered. It follered me down the road until I came to passon's house, un' then it giv a screech un' went out o' sight. Thank God it did not catch me."

Blank horror sat on every face, and for a long time no one dared stir from the house.

The tale was soon told everywhere in the village, but Tom, the hero of the story, was not to be found. Ultimately he was discovered in a hayloft, and when the exploring party roused him it was thought he smelt very strongly of liquor. Next morning the villagers having thought over the matter with coolness, looked upon Tom with something like suspicion, and hinted that ghosts did not usually care for dry bread and money. Tom, however, stuck to his story; but nevertheless a good many came to the conclusion that Mrs. Bright's half-crown was liquidated, and not touched by ghostly fingers. Strangely enough, too, none of the town bakers could remember selling Tom any bread. Whatever may have been the truth with respect to Tom, the melancholy part of the thing is that the "Ghost of the Grove" lost its reputation, and was believed in no more, a ghost who liked dry bread, and had an itching after filthy lucre not being sufficiently respectable for Waterton or Bourneford.

HOW THE MONEY GOES.

MR. BRIGHT said on a recent occasion that India would not be so bad to govern if we had not so many State-paid pensioners. It might be added that we would not be so terribly taxed in England if there weren't so many official sinecures the occupants of which are well remunerated. The taxes would be very much reduced if those who work in the Government offices were properly looked after and were required to do a fair day's work in return for a fair day's wage. This is shown in a remarkable way by the discovery of a number of letters in an old box belonging to the convict Kurr, which had been lying in a solicitor's office ever since the Walters and Murray turf insurance swindle was exposed. It was stated at the recent trial of the detectives that Benson first made the acquaintance of Kurr through an advertisement, in which the latter announced his desire to meet with a person qualified to write an essay on any given subject. The answers were some hundreds in number, the majority of them being from clerks in Government offices. One of the applicants in the Board of Trade Office writes: "The official hours are here very short, and, having a large amount of spare time on my hands, I should not limit myself to the time you mention." Another, writing from the War Office—of course, on office paper,—says that, having corrected for the press, he has had considerable experience in literary composition. Mr. Dash Dash, of the Post Office, describes himself as an experienced prose and verse writer for the public press. Mr. Blank Blank, writing on paper belonging to the principal Registry Office of the Court of Probate, puts forward as his qualification that he has written several prize enigmas and charades, and is disengaged at four o'clock. The convict Benson, as all the world knows, was the successful applicant. But it strikes one as somewhat strange, and it might be also rather dangerous, that men in the Government service—all of whom are well paid—should be allowed, it might be, to sell official information to the highest bidder in this way. Yet our good friends the Tories keep assuring us that everything is so nice in the country that nothing whatever needs reform.

REMEDY FOR DEFECTIVE VISION.

W. ARONBERG has made it his special study to adapt Spectacles and Eye Glasses so as to remedy, and, so far as possible, completely remove, the inconveniences which arise from defective sight.—12, VICTORIA STREET.



Persons who wish to see the *City Jackdaw* regularly are respectfully recommended to order it of their Newsgut, otherwise, they may be, and often are, disappointed in not being able to obtain copies. Or, it will be sent by post from the Publishing Office, 51, Spear Street, Manchester, every week for half-a-year on payment of 3s. 3d. in advance, being posted in time for delivery at any address each Friday morning.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

One of Leonard Bright's complete short Stories of Manchester Life is given in the *City Jackdaw* nearly every week. The following have already appeared:—

BROKEN DOWN.—In No. 99, October 5, 1877.
 HEAVY HEARTS.—In No. 101, October 19, 1877.
 THE BOLTED DOOR.—In No. 102, October 26, 1877.
 CLARA BROWN.—In No. 103, Nov. 2, 1877.
 BOUND HAND AND FOOT.—In No. 104, Nov. 9, 1877.
 MRS. ALGOOD'S SECRET.—In No. 105, Nov. 16, 1877.
 WON BY A NECK.—In No. 106, Nov. 23, 1877.
 THE RIGHT WINS.—In No. 109, Dec. 14, 1877.
 AT LAST.—In No. 110, Dec. 21, 1877.
 RING OUT THE OLD! RING IN THE NEW!—In No. 111, Dec. 28, 1877.

Copies of the papers containing these Stories will be sent by post from the Publishing Office for 14d. each.

WHAT FOLKS ARE SAYING.

THAT people are now leisurely counting their gains and losses in connection with the recent festive season.

That the balance is turning up on the wrong side in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred.

That the demand for pills has been quite unprecedented.

That if only half the good resolutions made during the last forty-eight hours are kept, this will be a happy year for the world.

That a splitting headache and indigestion do make such saints out of poor suffering men and women.

That the said splitting headache and indigestion rank amongst our foremost moral teachers.

That the New Year received a welcome in Manchester and Salford which was so enthusiastic and universal as to cover the little stranger with blushes.

That the New Year desires, through the *Jackdaw*, to return his heartfelt thanks to everybody for their kindness and good wishes.

That some ten thousand persons thronged Albert Square at midnight on Monday.

That all who were present enjoyed the ringing of the New Town Hall bells very much.

That they relished the contents of their bottles and flasks a great deal more.

That the New Year will be a very decent fellow if people will but let him. That he is more afraid of the Earl of Beaconsfield than anyone else.

That the Premier wants to attempt something big one of these fine days. That he requires to be watched.

That the Bishop of Manchester again deserves the thanks of the public for sounding the alarm.

That if we once more fight for Turkey we can never again raise our head among civilized peoples.

That Turkey has been a trouble and a curse to Europe for centuries. That we cannot expect any satisfactory or long-continued peace till the Ottoman Empire in Europe is no more.

That it is madness to suppose that British interests are bound up in any way with the existence of a despotism which seeks to secure the gain of a few at the ruin of the many.

That trade is in a rotten condition.

That the drink traffic is in a roaring state.

SIR JOSEPH REDIVIVUS!

THE citizens of Manchester will, no doubt, learn with pleasure that the Town Clerk, Sir Joseph Heron, has so far recovered his health as to be able to attend at least to some minor public duties. Most of them will also be glad to learn—though a good many won't—that his recent illness has in no way impaired his intellectual vigour or blunted the sharpness of his terrible tongue. Really, though, it was rather hard upon the Infirmary Board of Management that that body should be selected as the medium through which the Town Clerk was to prove that Sir Joseph is himself again. In fact, it was almost unfair. Surely the experiment might better have been made on the City Council, which is bigger and stronger, and which has been rendered tougher by years of hard knocks. However that may be, Sir Joseph turned up at the Infirmary Board Meeting last Monday for the first time since his election, and I am afraid that some, at least, of the members would not be deeply sorry if this first appearance were also to be the last. The way the Town Clerk walked round that Board was truly sublime. Just after Mr. Alderman King had read the Clerk's report on the management of the Institution, and when other members were preparing to offer "just one or two remarks, Mr. Chairman," of a more or less philosophical and practical character, up jumped Sir Joseph to move a resolution adopting the report. Now, that surely seems to be a simple matter enough, especially when every one thoroughly agreed that the report ought to be and must be adopted. But it turned out to be by no means so simple a matter as at first appeared. The resolution, besides adopting the report, gave certain instructions and authority to the Infirmary Committee to carry its recommendations into effect, and, as drawn up by the Town Clerk, it presumed that that committee would have the wisdom, or think it necessary, or choose to do something which they were not told to do. I may say, by way of parenthesis, that this fact of Sir Joseph's trusting to anybody's wisdom is the only mental sign of advancing age which he has yet shown. Of course, there is no doubt that this particular committee would do the right thing, but all committees would not, and the precedent at any rate is bad. It really did not matter much how the resolution was put, but some of the members thought it did, and offered suggestions of amendment. Afterwards they perhaps wished they hadn't. Sir Joseph walked over to the chairman's high back chair, leaned against it, while Mr. E. S. Heywood shrank into the corner and seemed to wish he could get out—and from that point of vantage gave the Board an awful "slating" for venturing to try and amend his resolution. Mr. Alderman King scarcely ventured to open his mouth, and sat looking like a child that has been robbed of its hobby-horse, and is afraid to swear. A few of the others, who were, perhaps, not so well acquainted with the Town Clerk, were bold enough to oppose him; but were simply told, in effect, to sit down and be good boys, while the schoolmaster set them their lesson. Poor Mr. Goldschmidt, mildest and most amiable of men, got snubbed in a crushing manner. He made a proposal which would really have settled the whole matter at once, if it had wanted settling. But Sir Joseph would have the resolution, the whole resolution, and nothing but the resolution. "Now, Mr. Goldschmidt," said he, "you are so very clever at finding out—what shall I call them—well, imaginary difficulties," and Mr. Goldschmidt subsided. Of course, the resolution was passed as the Town Clerk put it, for, after Mr. Goldschmidt had been thus sat upon; no one else ventured to say a word, and the members departed looking rather sheepish, and seeming doubtful whether, if Sir Joseph takes to turning up every meeting, they will long be able to call their lives their own.

TO SMOKERS: Mounted Briars, Meerschaums, Cigar Cases, Tobacco Pouches, Pipes, and Smokers' Requisites of every description, WITHECOMB, 32, VICTORIA-ST., & 66, MARKET-ST.

AFTER THE FEAST.

[COMMUNICATED BY THE ANTIENT PISTOL.]

[The A. P. trusts that neither the editor nor readers of the *Jackdaw* will hold him responsible for the atrocious sentiments contained in the following effusion. It has been submitted to him by an unhappy friend whose misanthropy does not render him insensible to the honour of seeing himself in print. The verses, or doggerel, as the author modestly, but not inappropriately, designates his lines, are curious as showing the morbidity of feeling which may be engendered in one who is suffering from a bad liver and a bad balance sheet.]



WELL! yes Christmas comes in a season drear,
As you truly say, but once in a year;
But what we must eat and what we must hear
In honour of this so-called Christmas cheer
(And it's all a rich and surfeiting stuff)
Make this once a year, by th' mass, quite enough!
Then Christmas you see so blithe and so bluff (?)
With his calls for "boxes," bottles, and presents,
For geese, for beef, for turkeys and pheasants,
Has scarcely had time to vanish away,
Than mendicant fellow called NEW YEAR'S DAY,
With simper, comes in to whine and to pray—
You may spell that "pray" with a or with e—
For a most rapacious preyer is he:
His clamorous cry for fee and for gift,
Nigh makes a man's hat on his hair to lift
At this time of riot and mad unthrift.
Be hanged if half this stuff is not treason
'Gainst common sense and 'gainst human reason
That's said and sung about "festive season!"
Let's catalogue just a few of its ills:—
Hang measure and time!

In a rattling rhyme,
Up we will sum 'em,
Just as we hum 'em.
Well! first there are bills—long and unsettled bills
Which make us look blue—aye, blue as those pills,
Which swallow we must against our sweet wills,
As corrective for vile and nauseous bile,
Plum-pudding and goose—indigestible pile!
Through "nipping" and "gilling,"
Eating and swilling,
Those pills that are blue, and drafts that are black,
Down we must gulp, through this hoary old quack:
Who can count half the pains that we suffer,
For this, a grey old gluttonous buffer?

We speak of his beard so rimy and hoar,
And paint him, so blindly,

"Frosty but kindly"—
His coat covered o'er
With wintry gems. Why, the thing is a bore!
True, this year he came, for once in a way,
Tricked out in the true old fashioned array;
But if I may quote the slang of the day,
The thing was a "fizzle."
In dirt and in drizzle
He melted away,
And ah, lackaday!
Left us the sweeper and "piper" to pay!

Just tell little Shack,
Our artistic young crack,
Christmas to paint as he is, for alack!
The old-fashioned style nothing but bosh is;
Paint him in pattens or in goloshes—
And e'en that coat they call Macintosh is
A thing that's not inappropriate quite.
Have done with your robe of snow-powdered white,
And show us the soddan bedraggled old fellow
'Quipped in a "Gamp"—a gingham umbrella.
This is the guise that to us is familiar,
Sometimes 'tis brighter, often 'tis chillier.
Paint him greedy and grey,
Gouty and rheumy,
All slushy his way—
Atmosphere gloomy—
Sloppy and slimy,
Muddy and grimy,
With sky over head of a dull leaden hue,
Back ground, if you will, of dire devils blue.

But alas! I must own,
'Tis not these alone—
These very long bills,
Antibillious pills,
The slush, the rain and discomforting sleet
That me worry. Ah, there's that balance sheet
Will prove aught, I fear, but a Christmas treat!
I fear the amount
To balance th' account
Of profit and loss
On this world's dross
Will—woe me betide—
Come on the wrong side!

CLERICAL SQUABBLES AT ECCLES.

THE ladies and male gossip-mongers of Eccles, of whom there are not a few, are just now retailing a piece of tittle-tattle which savours very strongly of that highly-seasoned stuff called "Clerical Scandal." Perhaps it is as well to say in a preface way that matters concerning the Church have been getting livelier there of late. This is a natural recoil after a period of several years' dulness and inertness. The local print, yeelpet the *Advertiser*, for several years intermittently kept driving at "somebody" to build a new Church. People who came to look at houses in the places went away satisfied with everything nearly except the necessary accommodation to worship in or display their finery on Sundays and holidays. The Unitarians went in for catching the surplusage incidental on the rapid growth of the neighbourhood, and built a handsome new church which cost, roundly, £20,000; the Wesleyans with commendable pluck rushed after and spent £15,000 on a new Chapel with an inviting spire to it, and it was also built in a more fashionable part of the village than the old Chapel. Down again shot the little Cockney *Advertiser* with a welt at "somebody," and this time there was a deeper impression made. A new Church could no more be staved off by holding a public meeting or two and appointing a committee to lapse into forgetfulness as had been done before. A long story might be told how the Bishop went over and drubbed the rich people for loving port wine rather than places to preach and pray in, how the site of the proposed Church was handed about worse than if the Winwick pig had run rampant in Eccles, how letters and promises were sorely challenged and "understandings" became all but open rupture. A new Church to bear the name of St. Andrew is started, and by the time this saint's day comes round again is expected to be opened. One of the sores which the start of the Church brought on amongst the parishioners was the selection of a parson for the post; many people thinking that one of the two present curate, who are well liked, should have been selected. The fates ordered otherwise, and nothing less than a brand new Sheffield blade would do. There was a deal of scowling about this, but submission is a virtue, and the new man was hailed. He was single, and everybody knows the flutter the introduction of a marriageable clergyman causes in a parish where eligible young ladies superabound, as they do at Eccles. His introductory walks were accompanied by the young ladies from the vicarage, of course. In process of time he was to be seen alone, and another month later there were whisperings about some cold shouldering going on between the vicarage and the modest lodgings of the new curate. The knowing ones winked and spoke with prophetic tongues; some went so far as to claim the gift of knowing, others of thinking, all along it would come to something of this sort, and wondered that the incisiveness of the Sheffield edge had not penetrated the skin sooner. Some with a native hue about them, Lancashire fashion, blurted out in savage Saxon. The curate worked and won his way, but he forgot the great lesson of Job, was impetuous, always in a flustering hurry as if he were about to turn the moon with his heels. One evening, a few weeks back, he had a conference at the Vicarage, was crossed a little, and the walk home brought the Old Adam fairly upon him. He sat at his desk and wrote to a friend. He was fully charged, and there was a regular burst of an Armstrong gun. It covered ten folios—so says rumour—of matter, every folio of which was a vial of wrath, run riot, poured upon the head of his Vicar. It was an exhaustive denunciation, not in clerical, but Billingsgate terms, of the Vicar. While the Old Adam was still hot, the letter was addressed and posted. One can just imagine Auld Nick chuckling with delight as he had instigated the letter from a son of the Church about a brother, and then seduced the superscription to be placed on the outside of the envelope. The poor curate, instead of addressing the letter to his friend, forty or fifty miles away, actually addressed to it his Vicar, the man he had been belabouring, and in a day or two he received it back with a dry meaningful note that it had evidently been posted to him by mistake! The general verdict is such as a Stalybridge jury would bring in—"It warves 'em both reet."

CIGARS at WITHECOMB'S are the CHOICEST, 3d., 4d., 6d., 9d., 1s., & 2s. 6d. each.

SUNDAY IN THE CITY GAOL.

I MUST gently, but firmly, refuse to explain how it was I came to be present at religious service last Sunday in the City Gaol. If any of my good-natured friends choose to assume that it was because I was locked up for a breach of the peace on Saturday evening they may be right. They may also be wrong. Having paid their money (for the Jackdaw) they are at liberty to take their choice.

The chapel at the City Gaol is not what you would call a cheerful place of worship. It consists of a very large and high room, lighted by six or eight windows through which can be seen rows of iron bars which would have driven even the redoubtable gaol-breaker, Mr. John Sheppard, to despair. The only furniture on the floor consists of a harmonium, a tiny altar, a great many wood and iron benches screwed to the floor, and the high chairs in which the warders sit with their backs to the preacher, and their faces towards the prisoners. Only male prisoners go downstairs, and at one end of the chapel is a large gallery for the women, where they sit in rows according to their numbers. At the other end, over the altar, is a second gallery, much smaller, and divided into curtained compartments, one, in the middle, for the minister, another for the Governor of the Prison, a third for the Visiting Justices, and one or two others for—I suppose—the families of the officials or for strangers who may be admitted, no access from one part of the chapel to another being possible, except from the corridors outside. Altogether the place, though well lighted and aired, is decidedly dismal. If a man feels devotional there, he may be pretty sure that the sentiment is genuine, and not induced by the beauty of externals.

About a quarter to eleven a procession of prisoners comes trooping into the chapel, the men dressed in drab fustian, with their numbers in black fastened to the jacket, the women in ugly white caps and dark stuff dresses. This being the first time I had seen so many prisoners at a time, I naturally looked for the low brows, ruffianly jaws, bullet skulls, and the general hang-dog expression, which are said to be the distinguishing characteristics of the criminal classes. But, with a few exceptions, the countenances of the male prisoners were far from denoting any particular moral defectiveness—at least, to my eyes, though Lavater might have given another account. With the women I am sorry to say the case was very different. There may have been about 150 or 200 of them, and such degraded-looking specimens of humanity I am not anxious to see again. Not that the majority of them looked absolutely vicious. They rather wore an appearance of hopeless and besotted vacancy, and one was not surprised to learn that the large proportion were there through drunkenness—forty were brought in for offences committed while in a state of intoxication on the day before Christmas Day alone. The men, on the contrary, were, on the whole, a fair average type, and there were only one or two who, from their countenances, could be judged to be criminals of a very depraved order. If they were it might hardly be safe to bring so many together under the charge of only six or seven warders, apparently unarmed, for if there were sufficient concert amongst them they might in a twinkling overpower all the officials. But the discipline of the prison seems to make them very meek and humble. They sit on the benches, under the vigilant eyes of the warders, not daring to speak to or even look at one another. So strict are the rules that the prisoners are not even allowed to put their hands in their pockets, or to sit in any but an upright position. Each prisoner has a prayer book and a hymn book, which they have to place beside them in regular order, and the smallest infringement of the most minute regulation is sure to attract the attention of the warder in charge of the gang, a look being quite sufficient to bring offenders to conformity. As to the service the prisoners do not seem to take much interest in it. Only a small portion make the responses after the minister, and throughout they behave like men who are going through a compulsory and distasteful task. There is a rule, with the reason for which I am not acquainted, by which the men and women sing the verses of the hymns alternately, except the last verse which they sing together, each of the hymns in the book consisting of five verses, and the accompaniment being supplied by a harmonium. The effect can hardly be called pleasing to a musical ear. The men sing in a very half-hearted and growling kind of way, but the vocalisation of the women is naturally much sweeter, though often out of tune. I am afraid that neither men nor women have been much accustomed to singing; certainly not to singing hymns.

The preacher on this occasion was the Bishop of Manchester, who sat during the first part of the service at the back of the justices' compart-

ment in the gallery, and not at the altar downstairs—because, I suppose, although a portion of the Communion service is read, the Communion is, for obvious reasons, not administered. Dr. Fraser had a grand opportunity, and he missed it. The occasion was one which a great emotional orator would have gladly seized and turned to good account. The audience, indeed, was one of those which you can only hope to reach, and perhaps even then not very successfully, through the emotions. Appeals to the reason of people who are in gaol because they have acted unreasonably can hardly hope to be very effectual. I can imagine how Mr. Knox-Little would have used the opportunity if it had presented itself to him. Of course, we did not expect Bishop Fraser to reach a very high standard of eloquence, but he even fell below his usual level. He founded his discourse on the story of the two thieves who were crucified with Christ, and began by explaining that the Greek word which is translated "thief," means a great deal more than a thief simply, and may include a murderer, or a burglar, so that the two thieves may have in reality been punished for a capital offence. This may have been a curious piece of information to the prisoners, but it was not particularly edifying, nor had it any connection with what followed. The Bishop then began to argue that criminals on the whole cannot complain of the unfairness of the punishment meted out to them when they are caught, and that, though there may be exceptions, yet that, speaking generally, substantial justice was done. What on earth he was driving at I cannot tell. The drift of his argument seemed to be that the prisoners ought to be very well satisfied with what they had got, and thankful that it was no more, and that since, as the Bishop insisted, society must protect itself, they ought to be rather glad that they had given society an opportunity of making examples of them. Of course, he could hardly have meant that: in fact I don't think he meant anything in particular, but if he did I can guess no nearer. Then, after some very sensible but rather commonplace advice, I was rather startled to hear Dr. Fraser beseech his hearers "not to accept the modern doctrine that they could not help committing crimes, because society would not accept it, and they knew very well they could help themselves." The Bishop must have forgotten for a moment who he was speaking to. According to his own showing, the majority of the prisoners presumably could neither read nor write, and yet by using these words one would think he supposed them to be acquainted with Professor Tyndall's latest doctrine concerning moral responsibility! Dr. Fraser himself seemed conscious of the absurdity of talking to such an audience on such a theme, for he shunted it almost immediately, though it is a subject on which he dearly loves to express opinions more or less—generally less—profound and logical. Indeed, no matter what kind of audience he had had, the expression would have been absurd, for surely he must see that if the doctrine of moral irresponsibility is true it does not matter whether the criminal or society choose to accept it or whether they don't, and that no amount of praying people not to accept it will make it untrue. It might also be gratifying to the prisoners to be told that many other people not in prison are as bad as they are, and consoling to learn that the niece of a distinguished nobleman is now in Knutsford Gaol for theft, but I doubt if such information has so edifying a tendency as the Bishop seemed to imagine.

[We give this, as we give everything else, for what it is worth—only, we wish our readers to understand that we don't always swear by what our contributors say.—Ed. City Jackdaw.]

DRUNKEN DUNDEE.

THE Police Commissioners of Dundee, on the application of the Superintendent, ordered the construction of five double-springed wheelbarrows, one for each station, to convey drunk and incapable persons to the police office during the holidays.—*Daily Papers*.

To the mighty Town Council the Constable spoke,
Ere the Old Year goes out there are heads to be broke,
Then each faithful Bobby that loves honour and me,
Let him out with the barrows of Drunken Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle my horses and call out my men;
Unlock the great door, and let us go free,
For it's out wi' the barrows o' Drunken Dundee.

By the way, although trade is undoubtedly terribly bad, people still seem to have plenty of money to spend on luxuries. Seldom has such a trade been done in turkeys and geese as was the case during the late festive season. The sellers of spirits, wine, and beer also did a roaring business. We are likewise assured that never was there such a demand for Christmas and New Year cards.

WORMALD'S CREAM OINTMENT, FOR ALL AFFECTIONS OF THE SKIN, IS TRULY EFFICACIOUS.
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A SCIENTIFIC JURYMEN.

THE reason that Jones is not alive now is that he took a fancy to ballooning. His name wasn't Jones, but we will call him that. At all events he died. His balloon came down one day and tilted him into the sea, where his body was found floating some days after. The corpse was taken to the nearest public-house in a seaport town, and a coroner's jury sat upon it. They were all ignorant men on that jury except one whose name was Brown, at least, his name wasn't Brown, but we will call him that—it will do. All the lot knew nothing at all about science or balloons, or anything of that sort, and Brown felt rather mean when he reckoned them all up and thought about being mixed up with such a wretched ignorant lot. However, he couldn't help himself, and determined to bring his science to bear upon his fellow-jurymen so as to make them bring in a true verdict upon Jones. What vexed Brown most, however, was that the Coroner was the most ignorant of the whole lot, and quite unable to instruct anybody. When the jury had viewed the body, which was very damp, and made some of them turn pale and be afflicted with a sudden thirst which no water would quench, they assembled to listen to the words of the Coroner. He observed that from the evidence before them it was clear that the unfortunate deceased had perished by being thrown out of a balloon into the sea, and it would be for them to decide how it was that that accident happened. For his part it seemed to him that there must have been a deficiency of something in that balloon, either of the gas—oxygen, he believed—with which it was filled, or, at all events, a deficiency of some kind. It was evident that a balloon, was intended to go up and not to come down, and it would be for them to decide how it was. Then he left them to their deliberations. This was the time for Brown to make his knowledge useful. So, after explaining carefully that oxygen had nothing to do with balloons, he laid down the proposition that the cause of the catastrophe was the fact that the unfortunate aeronaut had an insufficiency of sand-bags with him. Several jurymen said "Hear, hear," at first, and Brown felt quite proud, when suddenly an individual who had hitherto pondered in silence on the explanation, observed, "Come, now, Mr. Brown, this requires explanation. It may be all right, but it seems to me that the more sand there was in that balloon the quicker it would come down." Several jurymen assented to this view, and pressed for further enlightenment. Brown felt scorn at this ignorance, but deigned to elucidate as follows:—

"Why, don't you see that if he had had more sand in that car, when he noticed the balloon going down he could have thrown some of it out, and the balloon becoming lighter would rise?"

To this it was demurred that if a balloon had a tendency to go down when there was no sand in it, it would never have gone up at all if it had had any sand in it to begin with, and in that sense certainly the unlucky Jones would not have been drowned in that particular manner. Several more voices signified that this was the common sense view of it, but Brown was not demolished. He was determined that science should triumph over common sense and what he called ignorance. So he said, "Gentlemen, pray be serious; let us argue this matter on scientific principles. You will admit that the tendency of gas in balloons is to drag them upwards. Well, then you must see that if the ballast of a balloon is too heavy in proportion to the buoyancy of the gas, all you have to do is to throw out sufficient to turn the balance the other way, when the balloon will immediately rise." Jones looked around with conscious pride, and some of the jury hesitated, but the same member who had spoken before said, "All that may be very well, but I stick to the point. You said that balloon came down because it had not enough sand bags in it. Now I can understand a balloon coming down because it had too many sand bags. But what you say is contrary to common sense?" A murmur of applause followed, and another member suggested timidly that perhaps a few cannon balls or so, or a haystack, or a ton or two of coals would have had a still greater effect in causing that balloon to soar aloft. These sarcasms riled Brown, but he attributed it partly to ignorance on the part of the other jurymen, which he still strove to remove. "I should have thought," he said, "that any man with any sense—" "Do you mean me?" said the last speaker. "No, sir, I do not; far from it." "Allow me to say, sir, that I never heard such nonsense in my life." "Sir, you are an ignorant ass." At this point a general hubbub ensued, and the scientific jurymen, being altogether in a state of isolation, the coroner interfered, suggesting that it really didn't matter whether a further supply of sand would have made that balloon rise or not. "One thing," said he, "is clear. That no amount of sandbags will bring the deceased to life again." At this point Brown rose in disgust, and, in defiance of threats about "contempt," left the company to settle it by their own way, which they speedily did by returning a verdict of "Accidental death."

A WAR CRY FOR THE TORIES.

LET us raise aloft the flag—
Flag of battle, flag of glory!
Duty calls us,
Honour thralls us;
Was a Briton known to lag
Ever in Britannia's story?
Shall a Briton fold his hands
When a horrid danger lurks?
Shall the Russians
And the Prussians
Make encroachments on the lands
Of the gentle, humane Turks?
Should you ask the reason why?
We are called upon to fight
'Gainst ambition,
In addition
To the fact that our ally
Is an angel of the light!
Never heed the blood of toil!
Never mind how hard the work is!
See approaching
And encroaching
Foes whom we are bound to foil!
Think how amiable the Turk is!
We have got an Empire, too,
Which demands the fair alliance
With the Turks
And their works—
Crowing Cock-a-doodle-doo,
Let us hurl our shrill defiance.
With the Turk we sink or swim—
Shall the pride of Britain fall so?
Shall the Russians
And the Prussians
Be allowed to swallow him
And the British Lion also?
Let us rise in all our might,
Ere our foreign foes degrade us!
We shall win
Through the din,
With an angel of the light,
Like the gallant Turk, to aid us!

MORE GREAT SCOTCHMEN.

SCOTCHMEN are in great glee. Some one has discovered that Osman Pasha is a Scotchman. Born in Scotland, when very young he landed in Egypt with Mackenzie-Fraser's force in the capacity of a drummer-boy. He was taken prisoner, and, according to Mohammedan custom, the alternative of death or the Koran was offered to him. He did not choose death, and therefore went through the ceremonies necessary for turning him into a good Mohammedan. He prospered, married two wives, and made rapid progress as a soldier. "But," one wrote of him in *Chambers' Journal* in 1845, "in vain they brought him over the seas in early boyhood, in vain had he suffered captivity and conversion, in vain they had passed him through fire in their Arabian campaigns—they could not cut away or burn out poor Osman's inborn love of all that was Scotch; in vain men called him effendi, in vain he swept along in Eastern robes, in vain the rival wives adorned his harem. The joy of his heart still plainly lay in this, that he had three shelves of books, and that the books were thoroughbred Scotch—the Edinburgh this and the Edinburgh that, and, above all, I recollect he prided himself upon the 'Edinburgh Cabinet Library.'"

One would have thought that this discovery alone might have satisfied the most fervid Scotchman for their day and generation at least. Not so. The heroic defender of Plevna, no doubt, is a true son of Auld Scotland. But so, also, it appears, is General Skobelev, the young Russian officer who distinguished himself so frequently and greatly at the siege and capture of Plevna, and who is looked upon as the most promising man in the Russian army at the present moment. Some years ago a Mr. Scobbie left Scotland and settled down in Russia. The gallant Russian general is that man's son, the Scotch Scobbie being easily changed into the Russian Skobelev. The Scotch allege that the fight for Plevna was what it was because one Scotchman defended it and another Scotchman attacked it. Of course, we're not bound to believe all that our friends say in praise of their country and themselves.

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"A HAPPY NEW YEAR!"

HOW true it is that one half the world does not know how the other half lives. Competent authorities tell us that not for many years has there been so much suffering in England as there is at the present moment. Workpeople are going about in idleness unable to find employment, and they and their families are starving. In South Wales the distress is heartrending, and at last the Government have stopped in to provide work for some of the poor fellows. Whole families are on the verge of starvation in Northumberland, Cleveland, Staffordshire, and other parts of the country. One individual case reported in the Sheffield papers may be taken as representing many others of which we never hear. An inquest was held on the body of George Lancaster, a shoemaker, 47 years of age. The medical gentlemen who had made a post-mortem examination of the body said that the internal organs were all healthy, with the exception of the kidneys, which were somewhat enlarged. The heart was soft and flabby. The actual cause of death he believed to be coma, arising from intense cold and want of proper food. From the appearance of the stomach and intestines the deceased did not appear to have had anything better than gruel for a month or so. There were no indications of bread or any kind of solid food. The cold and want of proper food acting on a weak heart would produce the coma. There was a great absence of fat; the man had no fat about him anywhere. He came to the conclusion that the deceased had been pined for some time, and he fancied he had been too proud to beg and too honest to steal. He had an exceedingly fine brain—a better brain he had never seen—and he thought the deceased must have been an exceedingly clever man. The coroner said it was curious that a man possessing such characters as the deceased could not obtain work; but he supposed he was one of the numerous ones who had fallen a victim to bad trade. He did not appear to have had much of a merry Christmas, poor fellow! What a commentary is all this on our boasted civilisation and practical Christianity! George Lancaster, this shoemaker with such an excellent character and such a magnificent brain, reaped or felt little of the benefit of either the one or the other. In wishing each other A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year we wished well; but what's to be done for the starving thousands throughout the land during the year on which they have entered with so much misgiving and fear?

OFFICIAL CRUELTY.

ONE of our occasional correspondents seems to believe that there is great need for thorough reform in the conduct of those who are charged with the administration of the Poor Law. In proof of this he sends us the following paragraph from a newspaper:—

"A woman, aged 58, named Margaret Edwards, was charged at the Lambeth Police Court with refusing to perform the task allotted to her as an inmate of Lambeth Workhouse. According to the statement of the taskmistress the prisoner had declined to dust some windows in a room two days ago, and was, therefore, 'ordered to be punished.' The prisoner, in defence, addressed the magistrate as follows:—'Yes, I was put in the cell as it is called, and had nothing but bread and cold water for two days. It was not to dust windows, but to clean them; and as I suffered from giddiness in the head I was afraid to get up to reach the windows. You don't know, your worship, how paupers are treated, and I often think it a pity the Almighty does not relieve some of us, so as to save us from a workhouse. I have seen better days, and lost my last home through illness. Inmates as old as myself are set to clean the long stone passages, the doors on either side being left open so as to subject the poor people to a thorough draught. They have to stop from twelve o'clock to one o'clock in a room where the flooring has been washed over, and without a spark of fire in the grates. This is under the direction of the Local Government Board. When I said that I could not do the work I was taunted by the master that if I did not I should have my dinner in prison at Christmas.' The taskmistress said this latter statement, and 'nearly all' uttered by the prisoner, was untrue. The prisoner, however, declared that she had stated nothing but the truth, and in the end the magistrate discharged her on her promising to do the work she was required to perform."

Our correspondent would appear to believe that nothing is too monstrous and cruel for the administrators of the Poor Law not to do. He says:— "Without personal knowledge of the circumstances related in the above, I have no doubt that the pauper's tale is altogether true, and the taskmistress is simply lying. I have not time now to fully explain the whole bearing of the Poor Law as administered in Manchester, but I may state that by an unwritten rule the relieving officers and the guardians both

act diametrically opposite to the expressed wish of the applicants. This fact, coupled with the correlative fact that landlords and house agents cannot recover more than a fortnight's arrears of rent, causes a vast amount of silent misery, which it is painful to think about. That I may be more explicit, suppose a case: A is poor. He applies to the relieving officer on Monday. The officer enters the case and visits the applicant the same day. The officer knows that his superiors—the guardians—will be well pleased if A be frustrated, so he informs the applicant that he can either come into the workhouse or see the guardians on Thursday. The applicant is destitute. He wishes to save his household goods, so he prefers to starve or beg till Thursday, when he learns that the officer has but too faithfully divined the mind of the guardians. A must go into the workhouse or be without relief. The poor system is now a misnomer. The case of those whose wives or children have become lunatic is still worse. No man can provide for the proper legal detention of a lunatic patient under about three pounds per week, and this must be in a properly certified private asylum. The county asylums can keep a patient for 10s. 10d. per week, but to get there a patient must be entered as a pauper, and the husband or parent appear before the guardians. Poor fellow, his misery will then be complete. He is often treated like the Jew in the *Merchant of Venice*, or old "Isaac" in *Ivanhoe*. The man that can afford to pay 10s. 10d. per week is asked how he dares to come there, and if he has any spirit left in him it is then destroyed, and he comes away utterly crushed." Unless our correspondent grossly exaggerates the existing state of things—and we are sure that he would not do so intentionally—it is high time, surely, that this whole subject received closer and more constant attention. Most persons who believe what he says will be forced to conclude that it would be better a thousand times to be laid in the grave than be consigned to the workhouse.

CAWS OF THE WEEK.

THE Tory papers—and no wonder—are getting savage with the Government. After writing in support of the policy of the Cabinet till the writers were almost black and blue, the discovery is suddenly made that no one knows what that policy is. Parliament meets in less than a fortnight, and yet even Conservative editors cannot tell their readers what's going to be done. It's really too bad, especially as the crisis is one of such vast importance. "Upon a review of the prospect abroad and at home," says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "it is, indeed, a justifiable thing to say that upon what may be done, upon what may be left undone at the present moment, the whole future of England may depend. Therefore, what may be done or left undone becomes a most momentous question; and yet it is a question upon which the country is quite in darkness." The *Standard* and all the other Tory newspapers are equally wroth. Nor is this the first time that Beaconsfield has played them the same trick. But one shouldn't be too hard upon the Government, the probability being that, though they mean mischief, they themselves don't exactly know their own plans yet.

MR. W. E. HAMER'S second Annual Exhibition of Black and White is now open in the Royal Institution, Mosley Street, the works shown being both numerous and of a high class. In several departments the present exhibition is much in advance of its predecessor.

It will be a long time before people, particularly "religious people," learn to live and let live. Throughout broad Scotland quite a commotion is going on in ultra-Protestant circles because the Catholic hierarchy is to be re-established there. All Glasgow is being stirred at present by the discovery that many of the nurses in the Royal Infirmary are actually Roman Catholics. A great public demonstration on the subject was to have been held in the City Hall the other night. But in consequence of a communication received by the promoters of the meeting from the directors of the Infirmary, to the effect that some change in the administration of the Infirmary is to be made, the meeting did not take place. Of course, the agitation is injuring the institution. As compared with last year, the subscriptions to the Infirmary have fallen off to the extent of over two thousand pounds since the agitation of this Romish nurse question. Although it is well known that different persons can no more think alike than they can eat and drink alike, we suppose "religious" folks will go on tearing each other's throats till the end of the chapter because they cannot see eye to eye on things both seen and unseen. They may please themselves, only it's as well to let them know how their conduct is regarded by others.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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EAGLE TELEGRAPH WORKS.—Offices, 52 and 85, Hatton Garden, E.C., London, Nov. 15th, 1877.

Dear Sir,—I am requested by my friend, Capt. Henry Bird, who is now travelling in Siberia, to write that your Antilactic has completely cured him of a most violent attack of Lumbago, brought on by exposure during severe weather in crossing the mountains, and that one of his followers, who was found suffering from extreme prostration, cramps, and greatly impeded respiration, to a degree causing his comrades to look upon his cure as hopeless, has wholly recovered from the same remedy. Capt. Bird adds that during all his travels he never possessed a more valuable medicine chest than now. It is with pleasure I make this communication, and you are at liberty to use the testimony in what way you think proper.—I am, dear sir, yours faithfully,
Mr. VICKERS, Custom House Chambers, Lower Thames Street.

F. R. FRANCIS, F.S.A., M.T.E., S.L.

18, Downs Park Road, Dalston, Nov. 9th, 1877.

Dear Sir,—I have been troubled with Gout for some years, and have tried all kinds of advertised patent medicines, from which I have found little or no relief. The other day I was induced by a friend to try your ANTILACTIC, which, I believe, has performed a perfect cure; in fact, although I am in my 63rd year, I feel as well and as young as I ever did in my life. You are at liberty to make any use you please of this letter, as I do not believe there is a nobler work than that of relieving suffering humanity.—Very respectfully,
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